

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (September 14), a total of 2 834 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 311 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 471 patients are in isolation wards, 201 patients are in second-tier isolation wards, 550 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre and 213 patients are in the Treatment Centre for COVID-19 (AsiaWorld-Expo), of which 193 in total are new patients. There are nine newly reported critical patients and nine newly reported serious patients. There are a total of 51 patients in critical condition and 55 are in serious condition, of which 13 critical patients are receiving intensive care. Moreover, there are 352 patients who have recovered, including 313 patients who have been discharged. In addition, 10 patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 67 386 patients who have recovered so far, including 67 046 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 79 766 patients who have recovered, including 79 426 patients who have been discharged.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Hospital Authority announces positive patient cases detected via admission screening or testing and clusters of nosocomial COVID-19 infections

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority today (September 14) announced information regarding patients who tested positive via admission screening or testing with patients or staff members identified as close contacts and nosocomial COVID-19 infection cases.

The following are the statistics of patients who tested positive via admission screening or by testing in public hospitals with patients or staff members identified as close contacts:

Hospital/clinic	Number of patients who tested positive	Number of patients identified as close contacts	Number of staff members without appropriate personal protective equipment identified as close contacts
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	3	5	—
Tuen Mun Hospital	5	10	—
Pok Oi Hospital	1	3	—

In addition, a 90-year-old female patient in a medicine and geriatrics rehabilitation ward of Caritas Medical Centre tested positive for COVID-19 via pre-discharge testing on September 9. The hospital commenced a contact tracing investigation. Two more female patients, aged 84 and 92, also tested positive. The hospital is investigating the linkage among the cases concerned. Three patients are being treated in isolation. One patient is in serious condition due to her underlying medical illness while the other two patients are in stable condition. The hospital has arranged viral tests for the patients of the ward concerned and they have all tested negative so far. Environmental samples have been taken from the ward.

Visiting arrangements for the ward concerned have been suspended and thorough cleaning and disinfection operations have been conducted. The hospital will continue to monitor the health condition of patients and staff members closely, and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest situation.

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 2 139 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 5 279 cases by RATs as well

as 161 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (September 14) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, September 14, the CHP was investigating 7 418 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 2 139 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (925 confirmed cases, 937 asymptomatic cases and 277 cases with pending status) and 5 279 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 161 additional imported cases were reported, including 140 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (eight confirmed cases, 92 asymptomatic cases and 40 cases with pending status) and 21 cases that tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 925 447 and 749 262 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations of the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Among the specimens received by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch during September 5 to 11 for verification testing of local cases, about 4.8 per cent and 75.2 per cent of them (seven-day moving average) are related to the sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, September 14, a total of 9 617 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 534 and 80 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 830 death cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (September 13), the total number of confirmed cases was 401 995, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 280 712, 31 and 240 430 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the local situation of COVID-19 infection is severe, with the number of cases tested positive growing at an increased pace. The CHP strongly appeals to the community to strictly comply with social distancing measures and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or mass gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

The spokesman said that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients, children, and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

The spokesman reminded members of the public that they can call various hotlines to make enquiries on COVID-19 (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html#hotline).

Government enhances arrangement of point-to-point transport services from airport to designated quarantine hotels and updates label for government quarantine hotel taxi fleet (with photos)

The Government announced today (September 14) that the waiting and boarding arrangements for point-to-point transport services to convey inbound persons from Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) to the designated quarantine hotels (DQHs) will be enhanced from tomorrow (September 15), with a view to further reducing inbound persons' duration of stay at HKIA. In addition, the specific label for the government DQH taxi fleet has been updated for easier public identification.

Enhanced point-to-point transport service arrangements

With a view to improving operational efficiency, the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) has, on the Government's request, carried out improvement works at the waiting area for point-to-point transport services to DQHs and rearranged the boarding locations of the free point-to-point designated transport service and the self-paid DQH taxi service, so as to facilitate the boarding of inbound persons as soon as possible.

The AA will place notices in Chinese and English at appropriate locations of the arrival hall to clearly direct inbound persons to the waiting areas of various point-to-point transport services. Staff members

will also be on-site to assist. The new boarding arrangement will help divert passenger flow and further reduce inbound persons' duration of stay at HKIA. Furthermore, to keep inbound persons better informed of the real-time availability of self-paid taxis to DQHs, the AA has set up electronic display panels at the arrival hall to show the number of taxis waiting at the pick-up point for reference.

New labels for government anti-epidemic fleets

The government DQH taxi fleet at HKIA has been set up on a trial basis since July 25 to provide a self-paid point-to-point transport service for inbound persons in addition to the free designated transport service. The service has been running smoothly since its launch. As of yesterday (September 13), the taxi fleet had conveyed over 29 000 inbound persons from HKIA to DQHs at their own expense. The DQH taxi fleet only carries inbound persons from HKIA to DQHs and will not pick up other passengers. The Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) has updated the design and enlarged the size of the specific labels of the fleet (see Annex 1) for easier identification by the public. The labels must be affixed at a prominent position on the DQH taxis.

In addition, to step up publicity of various anti-epidemic measures, the TLB has requested the anti-epidemic designated fleets, including the designated bus fleet for transporting persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 to the community isolation facilities, the designated taxi fleet for transporting patients to and from the Hospital Authority's designated clinics and the taxi fleet for transporting inbound persons to DQHs, to affix the Government Anti-COVID Measure labels (see Annex 2) in addition to the fleet-specific labels for public identification.

"The relevant policy bureaux and departments will continue to closely monitor the operation of various anti-epidemic point-to-point transport services and make timely adjustments with regard to the actual situation and demand," a Government spokesman said.





Update on supplies from Mainland

The Task Force on Supplies from the Mainland led by the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) has been working closely with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government to explore various means to stabilise the supply of goods from the Mainland to Hong Kong.

A spokesperson for the TLB said that the "Sea Express" water transportation service from the Mainland to Hong Kong has been fully launched and its capacity is rising to increase the supplies of fresh food, other daily necessities and manufacturing materials. The current supply of fresh food from the Mainland is stable.

The spokesperson said today (September 14) that Shenzhen operated 40 cargo vessel trips and transported around 4 130 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cross-boundary supplies by water yesterday (September 13), equivalent to about 16 560 tonnes of goods, all of which were non-fresh food, according to information from the Mainland authorities.

Since the launch of services from the three ports in Shenzhen since February 18 to yesterday, a total of around 950 870 TEUs of cross-boundary supplies have been transported, equivalent to about 4 535 400 tonnes of goods, of which around 2 320 TEUs (about 19 610 tonnes) were fresh food and around 948 550 TEUs (about 4 515 790 tonnes) were non-fresh food.

Meanwhile, to avoid a spillover of the epidemic, the Transport Department (TD) arranges for dedicated staff to conduct rapid nucleic acid tests, using nasopharyngeal swabs for specimen collection, for cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers at various land boundary control points. Only drivers with a negative result are allowed to enter the Mainland. A total of 3 570 rapid nucleic acid tests were conducted yesterday, among which 13 cases that tested preliminarily positive or indeterminate were found. The TD has passed the cases to the Department of Health for follow-up.

The TLB will closely monitor the situation and co-operate with the Mainland authorities to facilitate and implement various measures to ensure

both smooth cross-boundary land transport and a stable goods supply to Hong Kong, while reducing the risk of epidemic transmission in both the Mainland and Hong Kong.